A

SERMON

WHEREIN IS SHEWED

That it is the *DUTY* and should be the *CARE* of *Believers* on *CHRIST*, to Live in the Constant Exercise of *GRACE*.

By Mr. *NATHANAEL MATHER* Pastor of a Church at *Dublin* in *Ireland*.

Joh. 8. 29. —— *I doe always those things that please him.*

Rom. 8. 14. *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God.*

Ephes. 4. 30. *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.*

Printed at *BOSTON* in *NEW-ENGLAND* By *R. P.* for *Joseph Browning* Stationer. *ANNO* 1684.

Believers on Christ ought to live in a Constant Exercise of Grace.

Gal. 5. 25.

If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit.

IN the former part of this Epistle the Apostle hath been confuting that Corrupt and destructive Doctrine which some false teachers had been sowing among the *Galatians*, and wherewith they were many of them deeply infected. The Corrupt doctrine which he confutes is this, that Believers were both obliged to, and justified by the works of the Law, particularly by observing the Ceremonial Law. Having at large Confuted this pernicious Error in this Chapter, he first exhorts them to stand fast in that Evangelical Liberty that Christ had made them free withal *ver.* 1. which he presseth from the momentousness, of it *Christ else would profit them nothing*:

they would be obliged to the keeping of the whole Law, Christ would be of no effect to them, and they would else fall from Grace. In the next place he directs them what course to take to prevent the further spreading of this so dangerous a Contagion, *namely* to cut off the pertinacious preachers of this damnable doctrine; and he first laid down a general principle which he elsewhere makes use of on the like Occasion, See 1. *Cor.* 5. 6. 'Tis a proverbial & Metaphorical speech that they were all in danger of being infected, unless such were *Cut off*, A Sin or Errour in a Church easily Catcheth and spreadeth, because the Members are all members one of another, as *Rom.* 12. or all of the same Lump, that there is a spiritual union, nearness, and Conjunction between them by Virtue of the Institution of Christ; and thence if they do not purge out such corrupt Leaven, the Defilement is easily diffused with great Celerity and Efficacy over the whole lump. Next he insinuates himself by professing his confident perswasion and hope that they would readily be of the same mind with him & put in Practice this his direction *ver.* 10. to give impartial Judgment upon all that troubled them: So the Apostle calls the proceeding of the Church in order to Censure 1. *Cor.* 5. 12. adding *ver.* 11. that himself for the contrary Doctrine to this. (whereby they were troubled, and wherewith they had been

been infected) ſuffered perſecution; thereby Intimating that it was not too heavy a Judgment that they who troubled them with this new goſpel, ſhould ſuffer Excomunication; For either he muſt have bin utterly out in all his ſufferings of perſecutions, yea & in his perſiſting in preaching otherwiſe, tho' multitudes ſtumbled at the Goſpel thereby; or elſe all theſe corrupt teachers deſerved well to be cut off, who preached a way of Salvation contrary to what he had both ſuffered for the Preaching of; yea and (which was more) given great offence by preaching. Having thus made his way, he tells them *ver.* 12. what he would have done with thoſe that unſetled them in their former orderly walking and believing and profeſſing, even that they ſhould be cut off. But leſt any ſhould ſay, why do you thus write unto us? what have we to do to cut them off? he adds *ver.* 13. that God had called them to Liberty, *that is* God had called and brought them into ſuch an eſtate by the Goſpel, wherein they had a liberty of acting according to their place, in and for the cutting off of thoſe that troubled them. Not that private members may caſt out their Teachers by any Office-Authority over them, but that they have an intereſt of liberty and priviledge to act in obedience to Chriſt and in obedience to their Officers that are ſound 2. *Cor.* 10. 6. in a way of paſſing a free & conſcientious

judgment on such as are unsound so as to reject them. But because Churches are too apt in the use of this their liberty to fall into abusing of it, he presently gives a needful warning and caution *viz.* that they used not this their liberty as an occasion to the flesh *i. e.* Take heed not to act and vent their own corruptions, by and in the using of this their liberty: But Churches being so exceeding subject to misuse their liberty, he contents not himself with giving that Caution, But further adds directions to be observed by them, that they may not fall to the abuse of this their Liberty.

Direct. 1. *Serve one another by love* ver. 13. backed with two arguments,

1. From the large and happy Influence of so doing, all the Law is fulfilled thereby *ver.* 14. It would lead them on to the doing of all the duties required in the Law, wherein he secretly girds at those that would have brought them under the Law again. *q. d.* If you would needs be under the Law, here's an excellent way of being under it to Christ *viz.* serving one another in love.

2. From the Evils and Mischief that attended the contrary practice, *ver.* 15.

Direct. 2. Is ver. 2. *Walk in the Spirit.*

If you would not use your liberty as an occasion to the Flesh for the acting and venting of corruption, then *walk in the spirit*, i. e. *in the exercise*

exercise of Grace. This direction the Apostle backs with a four fold argument.

Argum. 1. So doing *ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh*. which he proves from the Contrariety between the flesh and the Spirit *ver.* 17.

Arg. 2. So doing it will appear that *ye are not under the Law ver.* 18. (being led by the spirit and walking in the spirit are all one in sense.) *i. e.* not under the Law to be condemned by it. This the Apostle makes out, & withall explains what he means by the lusts of the Flesh and the fruits of the Spirit, *ver.* 19, to 24. Of the lusts of the flesh, he saith that they are manifest, that they shut out from inheriting the Kingdom of God; and most of those that he names are such as people are most apt to fall into in the use of their foresaid Church-liberty *ver.* 20, 21. the fruits of the spirit that he instanceth in are mostly such as should shine out in Churches using their liberty, and against such he sayes there is no law that shall condemn them, they are not under the condemning power of the Law. Perhaps also the Apostle had his eye on the Circumcision, and Mosaical days and Rites mention'd *Chap.* 4. which the false Teachers said were of such Necesity, that there was a Law against those that observed them not, therefore saith the Apostle, if you will tye Christians up thus, there are things which, it's past

past all question *there is no law against* therefore look to these.

3 A third Argument why they should walk in the Spirit, is because they had crucifyed the the Flesh with the lusts and affections thereof *ver.* 24. and 'tis a very uncomly and incongrous thing for Saints to be led by a crucified thing, and if they be not led by the Spirit, they must and should be led by the flesh.

4 A fourth Argument for their walking in the Spirit is, because they were alive in or by the Spirit *ver.* 25.

Direct. 3. A third Direction that the Apostle gives how Saints may eschew the abusing of their Liberty is that they *should not be desirous of vain glory ver.* 26. if we be, we shall abuse our liberty as an occasion to the flesh, and use it in such a way as may be a provoking to one another; this desire of vain glory will put us upon envying one another.

Direct. 4. The fourth Direction is *Chapt.* 6. *ver.* 1. & the design of it is to teach Christians in the use of their Liberty to make a difference between the miscariages of men. There are some that are not Censurable Crimes but lesser faults things that do not unavoydably overthrow the Saving fundamental truth which the Church professeth, nor yet the comfortable walking of the Church together in all the ordinances & worship of the Gospel. and there are some persons who tho

tho perhaps through weakneſs they may be by ſurprizal entangled and catch'd in ſome carnal and ungoſpel-like Opinion or practice, yet they are not obſtinate or incurable therein. To ſuch, and in ſuch caſes, you muſt walk otherwiſe, if you would uſe your liberty and that power which Members have mutually one over another aright. Theſe you muſt not preſently *cut off* but you that are ſpiritual muſt with a ſpirit of meekneſs labour the Reſtoring of them: thus bearing one anothers burthens, and thus fulfilling ſ Law of Chriſt as he is the Law-giver of his Church, & hath given them Laws & rules how to carry towards all ſorts of offences and offenders in his Churches. *Moral duties* are the Commandments or Laws of God; but Church Rules and ordinances of meer *Inſtitution* are properly the Lawes of Chriſt, as he is the Head and King and Law-giver of his Church.

5. To theſe the Apoſtle adds a

Fifth Direction. Chapt. 6. 6. becauſe he had allowed them a liberty in *Cutting off* thoſe falſe Brethren and Corrupt Teachers that were brought in among them *Chapt.* 5. 12. Left they ſhould think themſelves at liberty to ſlight and weary out their ſound Teachers, the Apoſtle adds a direction touching their *Maintenance*, which is part of the honour and eſteem they ought to have for their *Inſtructors*: But becauſe people are apt to look on it as a matter of Li-

Liberty and not of bounden duty, at least as to the measure of it, and thence to deal fraudulently; the Holy Ghost backs it with a solemn Caution, telling them that they had to doe with God in this matter, and not with Poor weak contemptible men whom they could wrong at pleasure: Also with a weighty argument that the Lords dispensing of his Grace and spiritual blessings by Ministers teaching, usually holds a proportion with peoples dealing with them in Carnal good things: their souls would thrive less or more, as they dealt with God in this matter of Communicating to his Ministers. This is the scope of *ver.* 7. 8. And lastly upon this occasion of Communicating to their Teachers he adds a brief exhortation to perseverance in well doing in the General *ver.* 9. and to enlarging their beneficence to others also *ver.* 10. This is the *Analysis* and brief veiw of this latter part of this Epistle; which I confess I have the more insisted on, because it is not so generally observed.

The Text falls under *the second Direction* how Christians may avoid using their Liberty as an occasion to the Flesh, laid down *ver.* 16. and this verse contains the fourth Argument that the Apostle presseth that duty of walking in the Spirit withal *viz.* because they are *alive by the Spirit* or live in the Spirit as we translate it.

Quest.

Queſt. 1. *What is here meant by the Spirit?*

Anſw. *Spirit*, in this Chapter is oppoſed to the *Fleſh*: And hence as *Fleſh* is the principle of Coruption; So ſpirit is the principle of Grace. That divine Principle in the hearts of Saints, which is the ſpring and root of all new Obedience and holy actings in a Saints walk. And it is called the *Spirit*, as for other reaſons, ſo becauſe it is the proper inſeparable Effects of the Holy Spirit dwelling in a believer. And he is ſaid to live in and by the Spirit, becauſe by this principle of Grace in his heart, he is ſpiritually alive who by nature was dead *i. e.* alive to God, as *Rom.* 6. 11. Here is alſo an oppoſition between the life or living of this principle, and the death or crucifying of the fleſh, *ver.* 24. which is the principle contrary to it *q. d.* Original ſin is crucifyed and therefore you are not alive in and unto ſin, but you are alive by the ſpirit, the Spirit of God dwelling in you hath quickned you to new obedience, or made you alive by creating a principle of Grace in your hearts, and this principle being not crucified (as ſin is) but alive in us, we ought to walk in it.

Queſt. 2. *What is meant by walking in the Spirit?*

Anſw. Walking relates to all a Chriſtians wayes and Actions. The Greek phraſe here

uſed is a military word, uſed of Souldiers being ſet and marching in *rank and file* orderly, every one keeping his place: ſo that it extends to all the Acts of a Chriſtians life. And theſe muſt be in the ſpirit, that is in the exerciſe of his ſpiritual gracious principles. That this is the ſenſe of the phraſe, appears from the like manner of ſpeech uſed by the Apoſtle concerning a Believer in his ſtate of Unregeneracy, ſee *Col.* 3. 7. His former ſtate was to be alive in his luſts oppoſed to his being now dead through Chriſt as to the life ſpoken of before *ver.* 3. and his former practice was a walking in theſe luſts, *i. e.* a practiſing, acting, & fulfilling of them, a walking in the acting and exerciſe of them.

The *Doctrine* then to be inſiſted on, is

That *'Tis the duty, and ſhould be the care of a Chriſtian to walk in the conſtant exerciſe of Grace. i. e. In the acting of thoſe gracious principles that he received in his Regeneration.*

See *ver.* 16. This is that *Living to the Lord* that is required in the 2. *Cor.* 5. 15. See *Gal.* 2. 19. And indeed a Chriſtian cannot be ſaid to live any longer than he acts Grace: For tho he may have life in him, yet 'tis no act of life that is of his ſpiritual life except Grace be acted in it. As is no Action of natural life that proceeds not from the union of ſoul and body together

together and their mutual clasping on each other so 'tis no act of spiritual life that proceeds not from the souls union with God and clasping about him in Christ Jesus.

Quest. *What Grace must a Christian walk in the exercise of?*

Answ. 1. The General Graces of a Christian that are never out of season nor ever unsuitable, what ever the case and condition of a person be, *e. g.* Faith, Fear, Thankfulness, and Love; Heavenly-mindedness, Watchfulness, &c.

Faith, For (*Heb.* 11. 6.) fetching spiritual strength from Christ, and looking up to him for Acceptance in all.

Fear, Prov. 23. 17. that is, An awful regard to the Authority and will of God, as his rule subjecting himself to it 1. *Pet.* 4. 2. Putting a respect of obedience to God on all he doeth, *Col.* 3. 17. *doing all things in the name of the Lord.*

Thankfulness and *Love* and *Joy* Putting a respect of Thankfulness upon all his obedience, as well as of obedience upon every action *Col.* 3. 12. And from Love and Thankfulness designing in every thing the Glorifying of God, 1. *Cor.* 10. 31.

Heavenly-mindedness, *Col.* 3. 1. 2. Seeking and setting our affections on things above, and

an heart working Heaven-ward, designing going to Heaven in all he hath, and laying hold on Eternal Life.

Watchfulneſs, See 1. *Pet.* 5. 8. *Luk.* 21. 34, 36. *Epheſ.* 5. 14, 15. *Heb.* 3. 12.

2 Thoſe particular Graces, that a mans Relation, Employment, or Gods providence calls for.

Thoſe which a mans Relation calls for. For the Grace which the relation of a wife calls for 1. Pet. 3. 2. So for ſervants *Epheſ.* 6. 5.

Thoſe which a mans preſent Condition and Employment calls for. If it be worſhiping of God *Heb.* 12. 28. *Pſa.* 5. 7. If it be reſtoring a Brother overtaken with a fault, then exerciſe and ſhew forth a ſpirit of meekneſs *Gal.* 6. 1.

Thoſe which God's preſent Providence calleth for, both particular and General, Inward and outward: When God afflicts we muſt put on humbleneſs and mourning as our garment and Conſtant attire in ſuch a day, 1. *Pet.* 5. 5, 6. If God favour, then beautyful garments or garments of praiſe muſt be worn, *Iſa.* 52. 1. & 61. 3.

For the Reaſons of this Doctrine, I ſhall goe no further then this Diſcourſe of the Apoſtle in this Chapter,

Reaſ. 1. *It will prevent your uſing your Liberty as an occaſion to the Fleſh, and fulfilling the Luſts*

Lusts of it. Of this there is great danger, we are very apt to it, Corruption is even present and active to get the Start of Grace, and be before hand with it if we take not heed; Yet this is a great Evil, thus to abuse God's Favour and our mercies. To prevent it, there is no way like this of a mans walking in the exercise of it Continually.

Thus 'tis in their allowed delights and Creature enjoyments, and also in liberty given by the providence of God from subjection to others, from Temptations, from Afflictions: And in liberty given by the Institution and order of Christ in Church matters. and also Spiritual Liberty given by the Grace of God.

You shall not fulfil the Lusts of the Flesh. See *ver*. 16. Flagging in the Exercise of Grace and leting it fall, exposeth to the prevailing of Temptations and Corruptions which hence come easily to grow up and get head over us: Hence they not only stir within and sollicite, but Lead us Captive and prevail over us. If *David*, *Noah*, *Lot*, *Peter* had kept up the Exercise of Grace, they had not Fallen as they did. The Apostle makes this out, from the Contrariety between Grace and Sin, *ver*. 17. which is such that the exercise of one, keeps down the other: And lusts will mingle themselves in all we doe, if we walk not in the Ex-

Exercise of Grace, then all we doe will become sin: and so be put among our sins for pardon, not our Obedience for Acceptance.

Every thing we doe is a fruit of the Spirit or the flesh, and if Grace be not exercised 'tis then a fruit of the Flesh, not the Spirit, *Joh.* 3. 6.

Thus men come to fulfil the lusts of the Flesh, when they are doing duties that God calls for; Hence in mens callings, many men are but fulfilling the lust of covetousnes and Love of the world.

And in duties of worship, men thus come to be fulfilling a lust of pride and of Hypocrisie, yea of contempt of God, because not worshiping Him in faith, from Love and with Fear, they either look for Acceptance in it without regard to Christ; or else heed not whether they be accepted of God or not.

Reas. 2. *This will clear it up that you are not under the Law but under Grace.* See *ver.* 18. It will clear it up to others: for hereby Grace will shine out in you, and you will shew the Vertues of Christ who hath called you. So *Paul* of the Churches of *Macedonia* 2. *Cor.* 8. 12. and of the *Thessalonians*, 1 Epist. 1. *Chapt.* 3, & 4. *ver.* from their works of Faith and Labour of Love Concludeth their Election.

It

It will clear it up to your ſelves in your own Conſciences 1. *Joh.* 3. 14, 18, 19. For thus to be lead in the Spirit is a certain Sign of it, becauſe the Law gives not the Spirit, *Gal.* 3. 2.

He whoſe ſtate is to be under the Old Covenant hath not Grace, and therefore cannot exerciſe any, therefore if a man exerciſe Grace 'tis a certain Argument that he is in a New Covenant eſtate. *Exerciſing Grace* will Clear up your State, becauſe Grace by Acting grows more and brighter, and thence more diſcernable: And becauſe in this way the Spirit of God, the ſpirit of conſolation, will reveal your State to you, enable you todiſcern it clearly and judge of it certainly to your Comfort. Thus God dealt with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 22. 12, 15. *Now I know thou feareſt me* ——. And the Lord again reneweth his Covenant with him, and Confirms it with his Oath, for tho he made it before and gave him alſo a Seal of it, *Circumciſion*; Yet I find not that the Lord Ratified it by his Oath till now. And obſerve it, that it is not the outward Act of Obedience that yeildeth peace and Aſſurance, or on which Conſcience can give a Teſtimony of a mans good eſtate, (for there is no outward Act but a Hypocrite may doe it; 1. *Cor.* 13. 1, 2, 3, 4.) but it is from the Exerciſe of grace in that Action, that in Simplicity and in Godly Since-

Sincerity a man hath done it, as 2. Cor. 1. 12. or that it was done to the Lord, or before the Lord, as *David* speaks 2. *Sam.* 6. 21. *And David said to Michal, It was before the Lord &c.* For our joy in every thing we doe, comes in by such a tryal of our own acting, as no other but wee our selves can be able to make thereof *Gal.* 6. 4. *But let every man prove his own work, and then he shall have rejoycing in himself alone, and not in another.* And *against such as so walk there is no Law* that can cast and condemn them. For such hath one in Heaven that have satisfied the Law for all their breaches of it. Hence exercising Grace is the only way to have the Comfort of Grace.

Reas. 3. *The flesh is Crucified with the affections and Lusts thereof* ver. 24.

Not only the principle of sin but all the inward Stirrings of it; whether blown up by Satan or riling up from the secret lustings of sin it self (so I think signifie the two words which the Apostle here useth) have received their death's wound; and thence are (tho not quite dead, yet) in a languishing dying Condition, and sure to dye as one nayled to a Crosse is, tho he be not yet dead. Yea this by virtue of Christs death and your Communion with him therein, for that the Apostle aimes at, and hath his eye on in this expression that the Flesh

is

is Crucified. The flesh being crucified it hath less power to stop and hinder the inward actings of Grace, and its prevayling to Carry you on in the ways thereof. It was at first crucified for this end, and is kept Crucified upon the Cross of Christ under the hand of his Spirit and killing power of his death, for this end that you might walk in the Spirit being set at Liberty from the prevailing dominion and strength of it.

Besides, If you be Christ's you have Crucified the flesh, you yourselves have been active in, applying the death of Christ to that end and fetching virtue from it for the killing of sin in your hearts. And therefore not walking in the Spirit, is a retracting what you have done in this kind, and an undoing of it inasmuch as 'tis a yeilding and giving way to the flesh to live again and Act you again.

Reas. 4. *You are alive by the Spirit.*

You have grace and that not from yourselves but from the Spirit. You have grace: This is given for Exercise: that it should be drawn forth, and fill your lives and all your actions *Eph.* 2. 10. Grace unless exercised is so far lost: Its use lies in its being used, as it is of all other things. 'Tis below your priviledge and blessed estate not to *walk in the Spirit*; If others doe not that are not alive in the Spirit

'tis

tis but like themſelves, but for you tis unſuitable & moſt incongruous. This Grace is from and by the Spirit, both firſt and ſtill maintained. Thankfulneſs to him obligeth to walk in the Spirit, which is indeed to His praiſe and Glory.

USE. 1. For Information.

A Great part of a Chriſtians work lyes out of other mens ſight. Indeed the greateſt part of it is boſome work: both his watch and his work ly cheifly there where No body elſe ſees. His Exerciſes are moſt about ſuch things, Eſpecially the more grown Chriſtian that he is. And he whoſe great buſineſs lyes without doors is either unſound or very low in growth, Even but a Babe in Chriſt and in Grace.

Informat. 2. *A true Chriſtians life is no idle Life but a buſie one.* Eſpecially if a Chriſtian *indeed*; and in any meaſure ſerious and ſenſible: Yea when Grace is gotten and cleared too, that a man ſees he hath it, and ſo his Aſſurance is ſetled, yet there he hath his hands full of work, even to ſee that he fill up his time with Dutyes, and his Dutyes with Grace; for both theſe are included in *walking in the Spirit*.

Inform. 3. *A Chriſtian ſhould doe nothing wherein Grace cannot be exerciſed.*

For

For tis his indiſpenſible duty to act Grace in every ſtep of his Walk, therefore he may take no ſtep wherein Grace cannot be exerciſed. This Rule if attended would afford Direction in many paſſages that fall before us in this World; Eſpecially ſuch Things as appear not flatly Evil in the Matter and Nature of them.

If there be any thing wherein you cannot exerciſe grace, doe it not. True, the Rule holds not always affirmatively, that whatever a Chriſtian may Poſſibly exerciſe grace in, is therefore Lawful for him. A Godly *Iſraelite* might poſſibly Exerciſe Grace in being preſent at Sacrifices offered in the High places. *Solomon* it ſeems did ſo and therefore the Lord overlooked the failing and accepted his ſincerity. And ſo (I doubt not) many ſouls have in keeping *Holy-days* of mens deviſing, and not of God's appointing or approving: And alſo in Worſhiping God after ſuch modes and Forms as the Lord alloweth not: Eſpecially in former dayes when leſs Light in theſe matters was broken out. But it follows not that theſe things are therefore Lawful becauſe ſome have exerciſed Grace therein: Yet the rule holds Negatively, That wherein grace cannot be exerciſed is not lawful. It is in ſpecial uſeful in things indifferent: As for Example; *In Attire* and *dreſſing*

dreſſing; If you cannot exerciſe grace in this and thus *tricking up* yourſelves, or ſpending ſo much time in it, tis then unlawful for you. So in going into Company, and ſitting with them, Eſpecially in Publick houſes, *Taverns*, *Coffee houſes* &c. Can you exerciſe grace in ſo doing? Canſt put a reſpect of obedience to God, yea of love and Thankfulneſs on it? Canſt thou maintain an Awe of him upon thy heart? or does it not rather ever bring a ſecret diſilement on thy ſpirit? If ſo, tis then unlawful for thee. And indeed, the Rule is general, and holds Concerning all Recreations, Divertiſements, and univerſally all Indifferent things, If you cannot exerciſe grace in them, tho' through your own Infirmity, and much more if it be from the Nature or inſeparable Circumſtances of the things themſelves, they become unlawful unto thee.

USE. 2. For *Examination*.

Have you walked in the Spirit? Yea, have you minded it in all the Steps of your walk? or onely minded your keeping your Way, and walking on without regarding whether in the Spirit or no, what grace you acted in every thing. Indeed it is not enough to act ſome grace in a duty, but you ſhould fill up the duty with grace. *e. g.* Some dutyes are wider than others; a day of Humiliation than an ordi-

nary

ordinary every day's prayer, & therefore should have more of Godly Sorrow and holy fear acted in it: Hence rending the heart *Joel.* 2. 13. and calling Terrours round about us is the duty of such a day *Sam.* 2. 22. to beset and besiege our own souls therewith. So in Sacraments, *Faith* should be acted at an higher rate than is always required in hearing the word, because there's a most solemn sealing Transaction between God and us: and because God in these deals with us by the most affecting senses. Hence they are Dutyes, and hence require more enlarged actings of Faith. Examine whether you have acted Grace proportionably in all your dutyes.

1. *First-Table duties*: Prayer, Hearing, keeping Sabbaths, recieving Sacraments: If no Grace be excercised in these, they have bin utterly lost, God's Name taken in vain, and hence they will never yeild thee any Comfort.

2. *Second-Table duties*: what grace is exercised in these? Your Calling, your duties to Relations, your occasional dutyes and Converses *Col.* 4. 6. *Alwais with grace seasoned with salt.* Visits *Mat.* 25. 40. & 10. 40, 41, 42. *Rom.* 1. 11. & 16. 16. That Scripture forbids not only lacivious & dissembling kisses, but requires that in them God's glory be aim'd at: For as his holiness is his preserving his own glory in every thing; So our holyness is our being & acting like him therin *Joh.* 3. 6.

Dutics

Duties of Civility must have something worthy of God in them See *Ruth.* 2. 4. how their Salutations favour of God and Grace: verily this Rule extendeth even to these. Nay more, to Church Transactions, your debates and votes there and all your use of the liberty whereto the Lord hath called you, ought to be filled up with exercise of grace. And indeed it is the want of this, that makes Church-Members so often warp from the rule, and act the unsavory pangs and and distempers of their own spirits.

3. *Your refraining and forbearing from Sin.*

See *Nehem.* 5. 15. Else your very forbearing sin is look'd upon but as sin, while tis not from grace. For (as before was partly Intimated) tis of the Flesh and therefore is Flesh, *Joh.* 3. 6. As a man may possibly in Holy Dutyes act from Corruption, as the Pharisees did *Matth.* 23 14. So many a man from Lust forbears sin, *e. g.* from Pride, from Covetousness, from base Fear of men &c.

USE. 3 *Humiliation for failings herein.*

Christ calls upon *Sardis* Rev. 3. 2, 3. because he had not found their works filled up with the Exercise of grace before God: Before men they seemed beautiful and glorious, but there was a secret emptiness and deadness in them before the

the Lord. And for this he threatned them if they repented not to come on them as a Thief in the Night, in an hour when they knew not *i. e.* when they leaſt looked for it, were leaſt provided for, and in worſt caſe to bear it, and with all Circumſtances of Aggravation and Terrour: This the Spirit ſayth to the Church.

There is no ſin but we ſhould be humbled for it when minded of it in the Word; much more ſuch an one as this, which argues grace is very low and *ready to die*, as tis there ſayd to *Sardis* And tis a ſin of frequent Incurſion. a ſin that we ſin often every day, and therefore ſhould be the more humbled for. Though we are apt to make light of ſuch ſins, yet the Spirit of God does not, Chriſt doth not make light of it to that Church. Other ſins that we ſeldom and hardly fall into, we think it our duty to humble our ſelves for: But this, and ſuch as this doe us as much hurt, and uſually more then ſuch as affect us more with Sorrow and ſhame. If it ſeem to want any thing of weight and heinouſneſs; yet the Frequency of it makes it up, and more then up. We muſt *remember and loathe our ſelves for our doings that are not good*, but empty of grace, as well as for thoſe that are Abominations becauſe of the Evil of the matter of them, *Ezek.* 36, 31.

Conſider two things to help to affect our hearts

hearts with ſhame and ſorrow for not exerciſing grace in every ſtep of our walk.

1. Hereby we break with God and looſe our Communion with him: Not our ſtate of Communion but the actual exerciſe and enjoyment of it. If a man ſhould fourty or a 100 times every day looſe the exerciſe of his Reaſon tho but for half a quarter of an hour or leſs, tho' he ſhould not looſe the Faculty it ſelf, how ſad would you account it! much more is this to be lamented, becauſe hereby we looſe our Communion with God, ſo far and ſo long as we do not *walk in the Spirit:* And Communion with him is as much more precious then the uſe of reaſon; as Divine & ſpiritual life is more excellent than the life of Reaſon. In whatever we ceaſe to exerciſe grace, we do therein turn off from God and break with him, and were it not for Chriſt and His Mediation we were Loſt forever.

2. Whatever we do without Exerciſing grace in it, favours not to God's taſt it finds no acceptance with him, *Cant.* 4. 16. unleſs the ſpices of our graces flow out, none of our fruit is pleaſant to Chriſt's Taſt, and if not pleaſant to his taſt he Preſents it not to God for his acceptance: Hence nothing wherein no grace is Exerciſed is put on our account for a reward, but only amongſt our ſins for pardon or for puniſhment: hence if no grace be exerciſed, our

Salvation

salvation is not at all furthered thereby. And how sad is it for a man that hath a Race to run, and work of life and death to get done; to Nod, and stand, and sleep, and fall so often in a day!

USE. 4. of Exhortation,

Walk in the Spirit, exercise grace in every Step you take.

Look to it, not only that you doe what is good, but also that in doing of it you act the inward principle of Grace that you have recieved.

Here Consider.

1. *You have acted Corruption in all your ways*, Col. 3. 2. Let the time past suffice us, 1. *Pet*, 4. and from very shame and indignation at yourselvs for your acting of Corruption, be provoked to walk in the Spirit for the time to come: For you are much indebted to Christ, you have had much forgiven and therefore should love much.

2. *You must unavoidably in every thing, act Grace or Corruption.*

Therefore if you act not Grace, you will act Corruption. These two are the Universal principles of all our Actions, and doe Flow into every thing we doe: They are seated so near together, and are so Contrary one to the other, perpetually warring each against other, that if one give back never so little, the other will be sure immediatel, to come on. And

And indeed these two contrary principles shall and must lodge in the same soul, yea abide in the very same faculty during this life but the Conquest of the one over the other lyes in the ones prevayling more then the other to fill up your Actings. These two, flesh and Spirit, Corruption and Grace, divide between them all your Actions, there being between them no *medium*, any more then there is any Action that hath no Rule or Law over it: As there will be either light or darkness in the Air; So there will be either Sin or Grace, Flesh or Spirit filling every Action that is humane, that falls under the Command of the Will.

3. *By the* Exercise of Grace *the soul is kept in an Holy Healthfull and Chearfull frame.*

Lusts warr against the soul, 1. *Pet.* 2. 11. and thence the prevayling of them tends to the death of the soul. Grace warrs for the soul, and the acting thereof is the souls strength and health and life. Act grace in one passage, and you will come off from it with the heart in frame and fitted by it for another. Grace acted in our Callings, fits the heart for dutyes of worship, and in dutyes of worship fits the heart for the dutyes of our Calling: Yea, by this meanes the heart will be kept fitt for every Change and cannot be found unprepared. *Lamps burning*, and *Loyns girt* is nothing else but grace in actual exercise: This also puts and keeps the soul in a

chearful

cheerful and comfortable frame. There is comfort and ſweetneſs in the exerciſe of any grace, *Phil.* 2. 1. *Comfort in love.* For in the exerciſe of grace the ſoul draws neat to God, and hath Fellowſhip with him who is the Fountain of bliſs and Comfort. And hence 'tis that your dutyes and wayes are ſo empty of Comfort, yea indeed nothing but ſecret bitterneſs in reflecting on them, becauſe there is no grace exerciſed in them. Thus 'tis with us in our walking and Callings, we come off from them with a ſecret ſting or trouble on our conſciences, tis becauſe grace was not exerciſed in them. And thus tis in the moſt ſweet and Comfortable dutyes, Receiving the Sacrament, praiſing God &c. if Grace is not Exerciſed in them, if they are not performed *in the Spirit* they yeild no Comfort neither afterwards, neither are they ſweet in the doing. On the other hand, Duties that ſeem to be bitter in their proper Nature, *e. g.* Repentance and breaking the heart for ſin, Confeſſing it before God, and Condemning a mans ſelf for it, even theſe duties are moſt ſweet, and yeild unſpeakable comfort if done *in the Spirit*, if grace be exerciſed in them.

4. *Thus exerciſing Grace will ſublimate and ſpiritualize every action, turning natural affections into Graces.*

Thus a mans loving his Wife or Child, or any other Relation or friend, become gracious acts,

and

and his eating and drinking acts of obedience; and hence are of great account in the eyes of God, Thus, not the meaneſt ſmalleſt act, but it hath a glory and excellency in it if grace be exerciſed: as *Luther* ſaid, *a poor milk-maid milking, if done in Faith is more glorious then ye Conqueſts & Triumphs of Ceſar or Alexander*: And it will appear ſo another day, being recorded and regiſtred in Heaven for a gracious Acceptance and reward in the day of Chriſt. Thus a man's eating, drinking, ſleeping promotes his Salvation and adds ſomething to his Crown of Glory another day; as well as his Praying, or his Hearing, or his Suffering for CHRIST.

Tibi Domine et a te.

Advertiſement.

THere is ready for the Preſs, (& will ſpeedily be publiſhed) two Sermons on *Pſal.* 84. *ver.* 10. Preached at the *Lecture* at *Boſton*: by the Reverend Mr. *Joſhuah Moody*. Printed for *Joſeph Brunning* at the Corner of *Priſon-Lane* next the *Town-Houſe* in *Boſton*.